

*Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009*

**Statement on the Presidential Election in Afghanistan**

*October 20, 2009*

I welcome President Karzai's statement today accepting the Independent Electoral Commission's certification of the August 20 election results and agreeing to participate in a second round of the election. This is an important step forward in ensuring a credible process for the Afghan people which results in a Government that reflects their will.

While this election could have remained unresolved to the detriment of the country, President Karzai's constructive actions established an important precedent for Afghanistan's new democracy. The Afghan Constitution and laws are strengthened by President Karzai's decision, which is in the best interests of the Afghan people.

I congratulate the Afghan people on the patience and resilience they have shown throughout this long election process. Given Afghanistan's recent history, it is extraordinary that they were able to overcome threats and violence to express their democratic right to choose their leader. Insecurity in the country prevented some Afghans from voting, but it is a testimony to the bravery of the Afghan people that so many of them did come out to vote in the first round under tremendously difficult circumstances.

I commend both the Independent Electoral Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission for carrying out their mandates. Throughout this process, the United States has been interested above all in the strength and independence of those institutions and the need for them to fulfill their mandate on behalf of all Afghans.

I congratulate President Karzai and Dr. Abdullah, who both earned the support of voters from across the country. I also commend all of the other Presidential candidates who made this such a vibrant campaign.

It is now vital that all elements of Afghan society continue to come together to advance democracy, peace, and justice. We look forward to a second round of voting and the completion of the process to choose the President of Afghanistan. In that effort, the United States and the international community are committed to partnering with the Afghan people.

NOTE: The statement referred to Afghan Presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah.

*Categories:* Statements by the President : Afghanistan :: Presidential election.

*Names:* Abdullah, Abdullah; Karzai, Hamid.

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